



BEAR REPORT

A NEWSPAPER DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE CHICAGO BEARS AND THE NFL.

Vol. 11, No. 22 December 29, 1986

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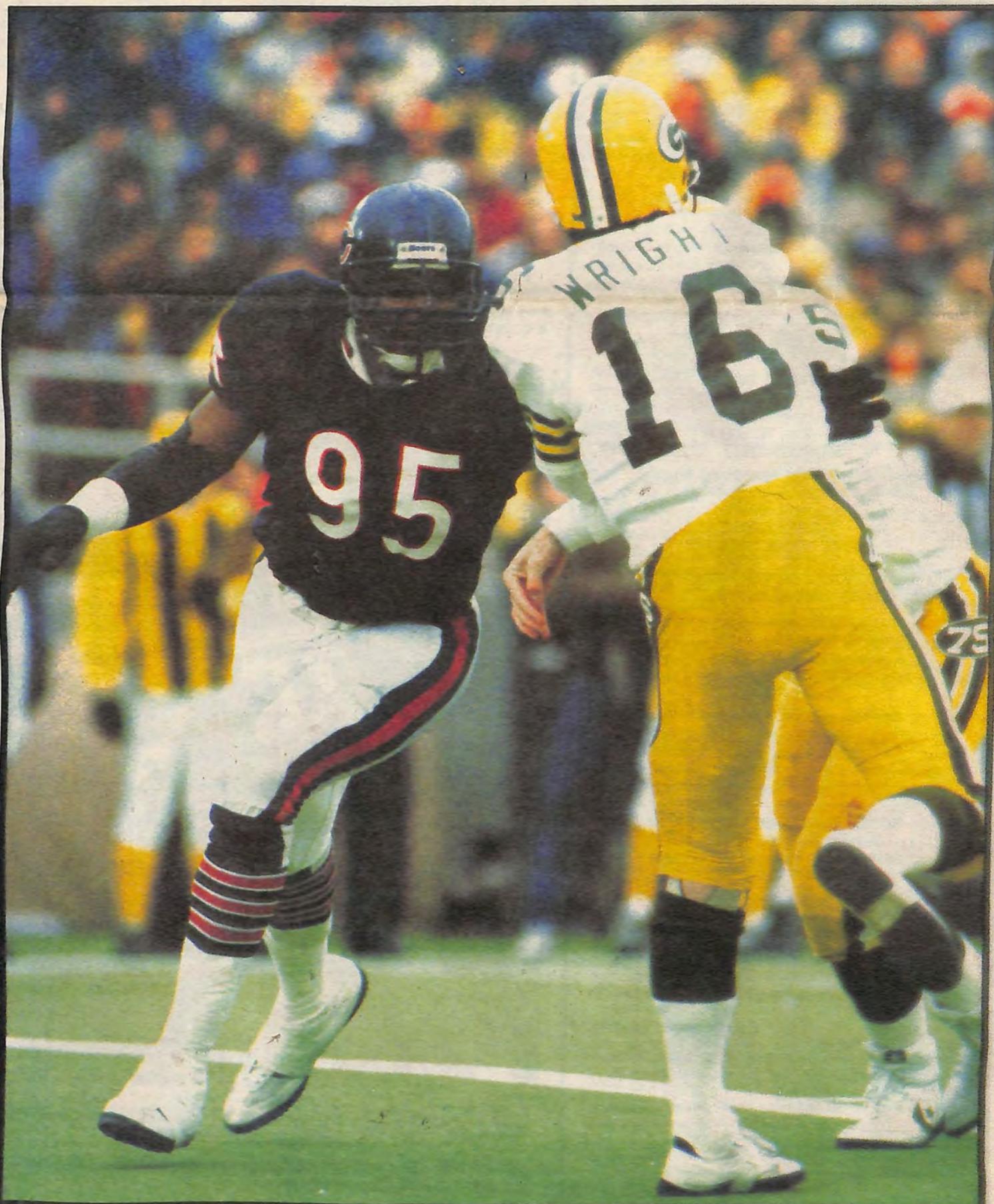
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BEAR REPORT

A newspaper devoted exclusively to the Chicago Bears and the NFL

Vol. 11, No. 22 December 29, 1986

On the cover...



Despite missing the Pro Bowl team this year, Richard Dent has put a lot of pressure on quarterbacks. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

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Commentary



By
Doug
Buffone



Success starts at the top

With the Bears ending this season at 14-2 and going 29-3 over the last two years, you have to give credit to the entire Chicago organization for the success of the team.

That credit should start at the top with president Michael McCaskey and general manager Jerry Vainisi. They've put together the front office and players that have made the Bears so successful.

The Bears' philosophy of never standing still and always looking for ways to improve the team have obviously paid off. They've brought in quality players that have helped the team and kept the other players striving to improve.

The thing that impressed me about Chicago's win over Dallas Sunday was that each player played to his ability. The speed on this team is amazing. Their ability to chase people down is so good I've never seen it before.

The Bears looked like world beaters on Sunday. They're playing some of their best ball of the year, which is so important heading into the playoffs.

The Giants started playing very well about three weeks ago. The 49ers started playing great two weeks ago. And now the Bears are at the top of their game.

Momentum will help all three of those teams in the playoffs. For the Bears it's hard to find any area in which they're not playing well. It looks like they've finally found a quarterback for the playoffs in Doug Flutie.

For a guy who's played less than two months in the NFL, he's showed a lot of good things. He can find and hit the open receivers and scrambles well.

The running game, with the great play of the offensive line, is looking healthy. That has a lot to do with the Bears having the best offensive line in the league.

The offense had good drives and made big plays in the first half. You can't ask for much more.

And the defense continues to pour it on. The line consistently put pressure on the Dallas quarterbacks, and Otis Wilson and Richard Dent were constantly in the Cowboy backfield.

The special teams also played well with Kevin Butler and Maury Buford again kicking well. Neal Anderson continues to impress everyone on special teams. I don't know how he missed making the Pro Bowl team.

It was obvious the Bears went down there to play. They weren't just going to take things easy heading into the playoffs. They treated Sunday's game like a playoff game, which shows how badly the Bears want to make sure they're in top form. The game got them psyched up and in the right attitude as they head into the playoffs.

And I'm sure Chicago will carry that feeling all the way through the postseason.



Steve McMichael (76) and Richard Dent put pressure on Dallas quarterback Reggie Collier during Sunday's game in Dallas. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

Flutie earns starting job with win

By Michael Polzin
Managing Editor

IRVING, TX — Half of the mission is over and so far it's been a success.

The Bears completed their regular season with a 14-2 record after a 24-10 win over Dallas Sunday, and perhaps more importantly found themselves a starting quarterback for the playoffs.

It came as no surprise that coach Mike Ditka said Doug Flutie would most likely start for Chicago in the playoffs after Flutie led the Bears to all three of their touchdowns against Dallas.

"Right now I'm leaning very, very heavily that way," Ditka said after Sunday's game. "I doubt that I would lean any other way."

Flutie started the game at quarterback for Chicago and made the most of his first NFL start. He played only in the first half while staking the Bears to a 21-0 lead. Flutie completed eight of 14 passes for 152 yards, including two touchdown passes and one interception.

"I'm still making mistakes. I have to concentrate better and keep working," Flutie said. "I'm happier, but if it wasn't for a lot of big plays I might not be. It's a little erratic. It's still a little shaky, but the smoothing out process is still happening."

Things didn't start out well for the Bears or the Cowboys. Both teams fumbled twice in the opening quarter, losing the ball to the other side all four times.

But the Bears were able to overcome their mistakes and take a 7-0 first-quarter lead.

Chicago's touchdown, of course, was set up by a Dallas turnover when Reggie Collier, making his first NFL start for Dallas, was intercepted by Wilber Marshall at the Chicago 47-yard line.

Flutie then completed a 10-yard screen pass to Dennis Gentry and a 26-yard pass to Tim Wrightman to the one-yard line to set up the first score.

Walter Payton went the final yard for Chicago's first touchdown.

Flutie connects with Anderson

Flutie increased Chicago's lead to 14-0 on the first play of the second quarter when he hit Neal Anderson with a 58-yard touchdown pass. Anderson simply ran by the Cowboys' Bill Bates on the bomb.

Flutie then drove the Bears 91 yards in the last two minutes of the half to give the Bears a 21-0 halftime lead.

On the series Flutie completed a 15-yard pass to Emery



Richard Dent bears down on Dallas' Reggie Collier to register one of his two sacks in the season finale Sunday. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

Moorehead and ran for 19 yards to move the Bears near midfield.

"I thought he would go all the way once he got open," Ditka said about Flutie's scramble.

Flutie also could add another dimension to the Bears' offense with his scrambling ability. "When you have a quarterback that can scramble it puts tremendous pressure on the defense," said Bears' safety Gary Fencik.

A roughing the passer penalty against Dallas put the Bears on the Dallas 33 before Flutie found Willie Gault alone in the end zone for a 33-yard touchdown pass.

"His performance speaks for itself," Ditka said. "He makes things happen, period."

Ditka's only concern with Flutie was that he tried to audible too much. "The plays we had called would have worked," Ditka said.

Payton also liked what Flutie did but saw some room for improvement. "He gets a passing grade," Payton said. "We could keep him after school and give him a little tutoring and he'll be OK."

Things also happened that Ditka hoped wouldn't, namely all the turnovers Chicago had. Chicago fumbled 3 times in the game and was intercepted 3 times.

Payton had the Bears' first fumble of the game in the first quarter when he was hit hard on the shoulder that bothered him last week during practice. Payton left the game for a short time but returned despite the bruised shoulder.

Fumbles are bothering Ditka

Payton's fumble was the only one that didn't bother Ditka. "There's no excuse for the other fumbles," he said. "We've got to hold on to the football."

That's especially important for a team that runs the ball as much as the Bears do. Chicago's 161 yards rushing in the game clinched its fourth straight year in leading the NFL in team rushing. That's the first time any NFL team has done that since the 1939-42 Bears.

"That means a lot," Ditka said. "Maybe it proves there is a way you can win by running the football."

But the fumbles didn't hurt Chicago that much because, as Ditka said, "Fortunately our defense plays better than most other defenses. It doesn't hurt us as much as some teams."

Mike Tomczak started the second half for the Bears, and turnovers again were common.

Tomczak, on 1st and 10 from the Chicago 20, looked to Moorehead all the way on one pass and was intercepted by Eugene Lockhart at the Bears' 30-yard line.

On Dallas' next play Collier was forced back in the pocket by Otis Wilson and threw the ball to Steve McMichael for another interception.

The Bears moved quickly downfield after that on a 17-yard run by Payton and a 21-yard flea-flicker pass. Tomczak handed off to Payton, who flipped the ball back to Tomczak. Tomczak then hit Gentry downfield for the catch.

Kevin Butler ended up kicking a 31-yard field goal for a 24-0 Chicago lead in the final minutes of the third quarter.

Turnover leads to Cowboys' score

Dallas was able to turn another Bears fumble into some points in the fourth quarter. After Thomas Sanders fumbled on a run at the Dallas 44, the Cowboys moved to Chicago's 32 before Rafael Septien kicked a 50-yard field

Continued Page 14



Neal Anderson tried to make another spectacular save of a punt near the end zone Sunday, but the play was ruled a touchback because Anderson's foot was on the goal line when he knocked the ball back. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

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KAIHARA BROTHERS

Bears-Cowboys Official Statistics

SCORING SUMMARY

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|----|---|----|---|----|
| Chicago | 7 | 14 | 3 | 0 | — | 24 |
| Dallas | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | — | 10 |
| Chicago, 1, 8:55, Payton 1-yd., Butler kick, 7-0 | | | | | | |
| Chicago, 2, 00:07, Anderson 58-yd. pass from Flutie, Butler kick, 14-0 | | | | | | |
| Chicago, 2, 14:36, Gault 33-yd. pass from Flutie, Butler kick, 21-0 | | | | | | |
| Chicago 3, 13:10, FG Butler 31-yds., 24-0 | | | | | | |
| Dallas, 4, 1:35, FG Septien 50-yds., 24-3 | | | | | | |
| Dallas, 4, 14:51, Renfro 11-yd. pass from Pelluer, Septien kick, 24-10 | | | | | | |
| Weather: Cloudy, 66% humidity, temperature: 52 degrees; wind and direction NE 10 | | | | | | |
| Attendance 57,256; tickets distributed 63,389; unused 6,123; time 3:16 | | | | | | |

FINAL TEAM STATISTICS

| | Bears | Cowboys |
|-----------------------------|--------|---------|
| TOTAL FIRST DOWNS | 17 | 16 |
| By Rushing | 10 | 3 |
| By Passing | 6 | 11 |
| By Penalty | 1 | 2 |
| THIRD DOWN EFFICIENCY | 5-12 | 2-14 |
| FOURTH DOWN EFFICIENCY | 0-0 | 1-2 |
| TOTAL NET YARDS | 322 | 260 |
| Total Off. Plays | | |
| (Inc. times passing) | 63 | 69 |
| Av. Gain per Off. Play | 5.1 | 3.7 |
| NET YARDS RUSHING | 161 | 110 |
| Total Rushing Plays | 38 | 25 |
| Av. Gain Per Rush. Play | 4.2 | 4.4 |
| NET YARDS PASSING | 161 | 150 |
| Times Thrown — | | |
| Yds. Lost Att. To Pass | 3-12 | 7-67 |
| Gross Yds. Passing | 173 | 217 |
| PASS ATT. — COMP. — | 22-9-3 | 37-18-3 |
| HAD INTERCEPTED | | |
| Av. Gain Per Pass Play | | |
| (Inc. times thrown passing) | 6.4 | 3.4 |
| PUNTS — NO. AND AV. | 6-43.1 | 8-42.5 |
| Had Blocked | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL RET. YARDAGE | 70 | 129 |
| No. and Yds. Punt Ret. | 6-49 | 2-5 |
| No. and Yds. KO Returns | 1-15 | 5-119 |
| No. and Yds. Interc. Ret. | 3-6 | 3-5 |
| PENALTIES — NO. AND YDS. | 5-33 | 8-60 |
| FUMBLES — NO. AND LOST | 3-3 | 2-2 |
| TOUCHDOWNS | 3 | 1 |
| Rushing | 1 | 0 |
| Passing | 2 | 1 |
| Returns | 0 | 0 |
| EXTRA POINTS MADE — ATT. | 3-3 | 1-1 |
| FG MADE — ATT. | 1-1 | 1-1 |
| TIME OF POSSESSION | 30:25 | 20:35 |

| Dallas | T | A | S | Bears | T | A | S |
|-----------|---|---|-------|------------|---|---|---|
| Rohrer | 6 | 3 | 0 | Jackson | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| R. White | 4 | 2 | 0 | Duerson | 4 | 3 | 0 |
| Hegman | 4 | 0 | 0 | Fencik | 4 | 2 | 0 |
| Downs | 3 | 2 | 0 | Richardson | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Jones | 3 | 1 | 0 | Wilson | 4 | 0 | 2 |
| Walls | 2 | 2 | 0 | Marshall | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Bates | 2 | 0 | 1/2 | Singletary | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| Jax | 2 | 0 | 0 | Perry | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| DeOssie | 2 | 0 | 0 | Gayle | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Lockhart | 2 | 2 | 0 | Rivera | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Penn | 2 | 1 | 0 | McMichael | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Pozderac | 2 | 0 | 0 | Sanders | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Cosbie | 2 | 0 | 0 | Douglass | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Scott | 1 | 1 | 0 | Phillips | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Holloway | 1 | 0 | 0 | Harris | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Fellows | 1 | 1 | 0 | Flutie | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Albritton | 1 | 3 | 0 | Fuller | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Smerek | 1 | 0 | 1 1/2 | Anderson | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Jeffcoat | 1 | 0 | 1 | Van Horne | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Dutton | 1 | 1 | 0 | Gault | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Brooks | 1 | 0 | 0 | Moorehead | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Fowler | 1 | 0 | 0 | Dent | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Hill | 1 | 0 | 0 | | | | |
| Saxon | 0 | 1 | 0 | | | | |

FINAL INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

| Bears | Att. | Yds. | Avg. | LG |
|----------|------|------|------|----|
| Payton | 13 | 51 | 3.9 | 17 |
| Suhey | 4 | 16 | 4.0 | 10 |
| Anderson | 9 | 30 | 3.3 | 7 |
| Thomas | 5 | 25 | 5.0 | 8 |
| Flutie | 1 | 19 | 19 | 19 |
| Gault | 1 | 11 | 11 | 11 |
| Sanders | 2 | 3 | 1.5 | 2 |
| Gentry | 2 | 7 | 3.5 | 4 |
| Fuller | 1 | -1 | -1 | -1 |

PASSING

| | Att. | Cmp. | Yds. | Int. |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|
| Pelluer | 28 | 14 | 173 | 1 |
| Collier | 9 | 4 | 44 | 2 |
| | | | | |
| PASS RECEIVING | | | | |
| Renfro | 5 | 76 | 24 | |
| Sherrard | 4 | 36 | 14 | |
| Walker | 4 | 30 | 17 | |
| Banks | 1 | 19 | 19 | |
| Dorsett | 1 | 19 | 19 | |
| Newsome | 1 | 19 | 19 | |
| Hill | 2 | 18 | 9 | |

RUSHING

| | Att. | Yds. | Avg. | LG |
|---------|------|------|------|----|
| Dorsett | 11 | 65 | 5.9 | 21 |
| Collier | 5 | 32 | 6.4 | 16 |
| Pelluer | 2 | 8 | 4.0 | 5 |
| Walker | 5 | 3 | 0.6 | 1 |
| Lavette | 2 | 2 | 1.0 | 2 |

| | Att. | Yds. | Avg. | LG |
|---------|------|------|------|----|
| Banks | 1 | 19 | 19 | |
| Dorsett | 1 | 19 | 19 | |
| Newsome | 1 | 19 | 19 | |
| Hill | 2 | 18 | 9 | |



Willie Gault tries to get away from a couple of Dallas defenders after running a reverse Sunday for 11 yards. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

Special playoff issues set

The BEAR REPORT has set its printing schedule for special playoff issues. The issues will be sent at no charge to all subscribers.

The BEAR REPORT will publish on Dec. 29 to preview the Bears' first playoff game. There also will be coverage of the NFC Wild-Card game played the previous weekend.

Subscribers also will receive the paper the week of Jan. 5 with full coverage of Chicago's opening playoff game.

The Super Bowl preview issue will be published Jan. 19 and sent to subscribers that week.

The BEAR REPORT also will publish on Jan. 12 if the Bears play in the NFC championship game.

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Ditka rewriting the book on quarterbacks

Hindsight will be the judge of Mike Ditka's foresight in the little matter of quarterbacks and how the coach is handling them.

Ditka will either rewrite the coaching manual or be told to reread it. Instead of treating the Bear quarterbacks with kid gloves, he is treating them with no more respect than guards, for heaven's sake.

And Mike Tomczak and Doug Flutie are only kids! People think Ditka must be kidding.

Quarterbacks are supposed to be special. They are the team leaders. They provide stability. As quarterbacks go, so go wins, losses and coaches.

By
Don
Pierson



Conventional theory is to treat quarterbacks with reverence and respect and loyalty. If you don't, they might say nasty things about you on their radio shows. Every quarterback has a radio show and people with radio shows demand respect because they can say more nasty things than people with television shows can say.

For a team to change quarterbacks, or even think about it so late in a season, is worse than changing wives late in life. It causes more bother than worth.

Quarterback job is in the air

The Bears won six starts in a row with Tomczak starting at quarterback and Ditka announced that the quarterback job was "up in the air."

Even Flutie couldn't understand Ditka's reasoning, but he wasn't arguing.



MIKE TOMCZAK



DOUG FLUTIE

"I'm just trying to get myself into position to help this team win," Flutie said.

That's all Ditka is trying to do, too, but his method is considered mad in some circles.

It would be one thing to give Flutie some playing time during meaningless games in order to be prepared for emergency; it's quite another to throw the job open for application.

Instead of anointing Tomczak as his No. 1 man, Ditka has said only that competition is No. 1.

It was unsettling to Tomczak, not to mention Steve Fuller, who wasn't allowed into the competition until Tomczak injured his leg against Detroit.

It is also unsettling on other players, although not all of them will admit it. Split end Willie Gault said he dropped a pass while worrying about Tomczak's hurt feelings.

But Gault said he learned a lesson. And maybe that's all Ditka is trying to teach — that football players play and football coaches coach. The players didn't like Ditka's idea of hiring Flutie in the first place. Now that he's played, they like it better. Still, uncertainty at quarterback usually means the shakes in playoff games. Time will tell.

Tomczak himself seemed to be keeping a cool head while the situation around him heated up. Since he understands he has no choice, it helps not to look for one.

"Maybe he's testing me," Tomczak said before the Lions' game. "Maybe he's trying to see how far he can go before I break."

Ditka is not expansive on his motives for treating quarterbacks the same as flankers, fullbacks and tight ends.

"Most overrated thing I've seen in my life," Ditka said.

Ditka doesn't want mistakes

Ditka pointed out two things: the Bears don't have a Johnny Unitas around, and they don't need one with the defense they have.

All they need is a quarterback who doesn't make mistakes. Ditka is putting so much pressure on his quarterbacks not to make mistakes that game situations must seem easy.

Usually, coaches worry about stifling a quarterback's creativity by concentrating on mistakes under threat of expulsion. Ditka worries more about the mistakes than about the quarterback's psyche.

Former Eagles' coach Dick Vermeil interviewed Ditka for CBS-TV two weeks ago. When the show was aired, CBS used a clip of Vermeil on the sidelines telling Eagles' quarterback Ron Jaworski, "Now you know I would never

yank you."

Contrast that with Ditka telling former quarterback Bob Avellini: "I'm going to fire you!"

Creative tension is at the root of Ditka's coaching philosophy, even though he crosses his eyes at the mention of such a psychological expression.

After the Lions' game, which was treated like an exhibition until the final quarter, Ditka talked again of his reasoning on a subject that has captured the attention of the nation.

He said Flutie would start against Dallas and Fuller would play.

"This is not a closed book at all," he said. "I just think I have to follow through on the game plan I set for bringing in Mike and Doug and see where we're at going into the playoffs. If Steve ended up starting the playoffs, I wouldn't feel bad at all. It doesn't matter."

Ditka wants nothing more than to make critics and his players believe it really doesn't matter. Because if the world champions go into the playoffs relying on a quarterback to carry them, they would be as disappointed as most teams who rely on a quarterback to carry them. The Miami Dolphins, for example, have a quarterback who has passed for more than 40 touchdowns and they aren't even in the playoffs.

If Ditka allows his quarterback, whoever it is, to hand off and set up play-action passes, the importance of the quarterback does indeed decrease.

Ditka vows to simplify his attack and again concentrate on ball control and field position, which is all a great defense needs. Points, which aren't all that necessary, tend to come almost by accident.

"We can't have people running all over the field with different formations and expect the quarterback to read the defense and call plays," Ditka said.

If he follows his own advice, the Bears' playoff hopes brighten. After the impressive fourth-quarter comeback in Detroit — with straight-ahead handoffs and power football — the Bears seemed to make their coach a believer.

"All the other playoff teams have established quarterbacks," Ditka said. "I've got to play with the hand we were dealt. I didn't expect it to come down this way, but it did. I kind of like our position. The win in Detroit was nice to get and the way we won it showed a little of the character of our football team. Four years ago, it would have been just the opposite. We would have had no chance to win."



STEVE FULLER

15-game totals**Bears Defensive Stats**

| <u>Player</u> | <u>Total</u> | <u>Solo</u> | <u>Assists</u> | <u>PD's</u> | <u>FR's</u> | <u>FC</u> | <u>BL</u> | <u>Sacks/Yds</u> |
|------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------------------|
| Mike Singletary | 126 | 65 | 61 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 / 9 |
| Gary Fencik | 123 | 62 | 61 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 / 11 |
| Wilber Marshall | 100 | 57 | 43 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 4.5 / 44 |
| Dave Duerson | 99 | 56 | 43 | 12 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 7 / 57 |
| Otis Wilson | 97 | 48 | 49 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 6 / 42 |
| Steve McMichael | 83 | 34 | 49 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 8.5 / 65 |
| William Perry | 78 | 47 | 31 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 / 33 |
| Mike Richardson | 63 | 42 | 21 | 16 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 / 0 |
| Reggie Phillips | 31 | 16 | 15 | 10 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 / 0 |
| Dan Hampton | 69 | 30 | 39 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 9.5 / 83 |
| Richard Dent | 73 | 30 | 43 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 9.5 / 65 |
| Vestee Jackson | 39 | 18 | 11 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 / 0 |
| Todd Bell | 13 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 / 0 |
| Shaun Gayle | 14 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 / 0 |
| Mike Hartenstein | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 / -5 |
| Henry Waechter | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 / 0 |
| Al Harris | 14 | 10 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 / 21 |
| Ron Rivera | 34 | 24 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 / 2 |
| Jim Morrissey | 7 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 / 0 |
| Dan Rains | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 / 0 |
| Maurice Douglass | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 / 0 |

| SPECIAL TEAM TACKLES | | | T | Solo | Asst. |
|-----------------------------|----|----|----------|--------------|--------------|
| Thomas Sanders | 13 | 10 | 3 | Todd Bell | 4 |
| Jim Morrissey | 15 | 13 | 2 | Keith Ortego | 2 |
| Dan Rains | 10 | 7 | 3 | N. Anderson | 17 |
| Ron Rivera | 4 | 3 | 1 | K. Butler | 1 |
| Shaun Gayle | 9 | 5 | 4 | V. Jackson | 1 |
| Dave Duerson | 3 | 2 | 1 | L. Rubens | 1 |
| Calvin Thomas | 6 | 3 | 3 | E. Moorehead | 2 |
| Al Harris | 2 | 0 | 2 | R. Phillips | 3 |
| Maurice Douglass | 1 | 1 | 0 | W. Marshall | 1 |

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QB decisions nothing new to Landry

When Mike Tomczak went down with a bruised leg in the first quarter of the Detroit game Dec. 15, it looked like the Bears quarterback situation might have cleared up a little.

Coach Mike Ditka said after the game that Doug Flutie and Steve Fuller would split time in the Dallas game. And with Tomczak's future uncertain at the time it looked like Ditka would only have to decide who his starter would be between two quarterbacks instead of three.



Bear Notebook

But two days later Tomczak's leg was feeling better and by last Thursday he was practicing again. So now the Bears are back to three quarterbacks who could potentially start in the playoffs.

Flutie started at quarterback against Dallas, but Fuller and Tomczak also saw playing time.

Flutie and Fuller shared snaps equally in practice last Wednesday. When Tomczak was able to practice Thursday the snaps were split equally three ways.

Ditka was glad to see Tomczak recover quickly so he could get more playing time before the playoffs begin.

"Mike still needs some time on the field," Ditka said. "He didn't get much last week because of the injury."

The Bears played Sunday against a coach who has had his share of tough decisions to make about quarterbacks.

Tom Landry has been involved in two major quarterback battles while coaching the Cowboys. Roger Staubach and Craig Morton battled for the starting job in 1971, and Danny White was pushed by Gary Hogeboom just a few years ago.

"It's most difficult because you have to make decisions on how you feel at that time," Landry said. "It can vary from quarterback to quarterback depending on the circumstances. You just have to have a feel for it."

Of course the Bears situation is a little easier because the offense isn't pressed to score a lot of points. "When you have a defense like the Bears have, it sure helps everything," Landry said.



Thomas Sanders (20) congratulates Walter Payton after Payton scored his 106th career rushing touchdown Sunday, tying him for the NFL record with Jim Brown. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

Which brings up another interesting question. Can a defense alone carry a team to a Super Bowl victory?

"It could have been done last year," Landry said. "It really takes an exceptional defensive team to do that. The Bears are the only one I've seen in a long time that have that capability."

But for a team to rely almost totally on its defense the defense must take charge of the entire game, Landry said. "They have to control the game themselves. They have to make the turnovers and create the field position that allows you to score."

•**GOING INTO THE LAST WEEK** of the season the Bears led the Falcons by 11 yards in the NFL in team rushing. The Bears have rushed for 2,539 yards, the Falcons for 2,528 yards. If the Bears hold that lead they'll become the first team since the 1939-42 Bears to win four straight NFL rushing titles.

"It could be a direct reflection of my mentality," Ditka said. "And when you have a great back like Walter Payton you have to use your running backs."

"The credit goes to the line. Overall, we block pretty darn well."

The Bears also are looking to lead the NFL for the third straight year in total defense. Going into the last game of the year the Bears have a 523-yard lead over the Raiders.

The Bears are second in the league in pass defense, 37 yards behind St. Louis. In rushing defense, Chicago is tied for second with Denver, 188 yards behind the Giants.

The Bears also could set a record for fewest points allowed in a 16-game season if they held the Cowboys to under 18 points. The record of 195 points is held by the 1978 Steelers. Last year the Bears allowed just 198 points.

•**THE BIGGEST ADVANTAGE** to having a two-week layoff before the playoffs, according to Ditka, is the players get a chance to rest.

"They've been at it a long time and deserve some time off," he said. "The coaches can get some work done, too. I'm sure the players are gonna rest and that's the best thing you can do now."

•**CENTER JAY HILGENBERG** suffered a broken bone in his left hand during the Detroit game but didn't miss any practice time because of it.

Other than Tomczak the only Bear to miss a practice last week was Payton, who didn't practice Wednesday because of a sore shoulder. Payton was back on Thursday, though.



Neal Anderson celebrates after catching a 58-yard touchdown pass from Doug Flutie in the first half of Sunday's game. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

Playoff tickets on sale

Ticket sales for the division playoff game at Soldier Field Jan. 3 or 4 began Monday at the stadium and all Ticketron outlets. Tickets also went on sale through Teletron, the telephone charge service, and can be ordered by calling (312) 853-3636.

There is a limit of four tickets per person and only cash payment will be accepted at Soldier Field. Tickets are priced at \$15 and \$22.

The Bears will face one of three teams in their first post-season game — the Washington Redskins, San Francisco 49ers or Los Angeles Rams.

Season ticket holders already have been mailed playoff tickets.

•**SPEAKING OF TURNOVERS**, that is probably Ditka's biggest concern with the offense right now.

"If we didn't turn the ball over one time, that would really be a major accomplishment," Ditka said before the Dallas game. "We're really struggling in that area."

Interceptions haven't been the only problem for Chicago in the turnover department. Fumbles have been more costly in the last few weeks. In November two weeks in a row, against Green Bay and Pittsburgh, the Bears fumbled and lost the ball at their opponents' one-yard line.

Against Detroit two weeks ago Chicago fumbled five times in the game, four times in the third quarter alone. One of those was at the Bears' one-yard line and set up Detroit's only touchdown of the game.

Chicago has fumbled the ball away 19 times this year. Only Los Angeles, with 22, has fumbled the ball away more in the NFC this year.

Chicago also has thrown 22 interceptions, third in the NFC behind Green Bay with 25 and Tampa Bay with 23. Chicago's 41 total giveaways is second in the NFC to Green Bay's 42. Chicago is only plus one in the giveaway/takeaway department.



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NFC Wild-Card Game**Washington vs. Los Angeles****Sunday, Dec. 28****RFK Stadium****Washington, DC****Washington Redskins Numerical Roster**

| No. | Name | Pos. | Ht. | Wt. | Age | Yr. | College |
|-----|------------------|-------|------|-----|-----|-----|------------------|
| 10 | Jay Schroeder | QB | 6-4 | 214 | 25 | 3 | UCLA |
| 12 | Steve Cox | P | 6-4 | 195 | 28 | 6 | Arkansas |
| 14 | Max Zendejas | K | 5-11 | 184 | 23 | R | Arizona |
| 17 | Doug Williams | QB | 6-4 | 220 | 31 | 6 | Grambling |
| 22 | Curtis Jordan | FS | 6-2 | 204 | 32 | 10 | Texas Tech |
| 23 | Todd Bowles | S | 6-2 | 203 | 22 | R | Temple |
| 24 | Kelvin Bryant | RB | 6-2 | 195 | 26 | 1 | North Carolina |
| 28 | Darrell Green | CB | 5-8 | 170 | 26 | 4 | Texas A&M |
| 31 | Ken Jenkins | RB/KR | 5-8 | 185 | 27 | 4 | Bucknell |
| 32 | Vernon Dean | CB | 5-11 | 178 | 27 | 5 | San Diego St. |
| 35 | Keith Griffin | RB | 5-8 | 185 | 25 | 3 | Miami (FL) |
| 38 | George Rogers | RB | 6-2 | 229 | 27 | 6 | South Carolina |
| 40 | Alvin Walton | S | 6-0 | 180 | 22 | R | Kansas |
| 41 | Tom Morrison | CB | 6-1 | 195 | 23 | R | North Carolina |
| 45 | Barry Wilburn | CB | 6-3 | 186 | 22 | 2 | Mississippi |
| 46 | Ricky Sanders | RB | 5-11 | 180 | 24 | 1 | SW Texas St. |
| 48 | Ken Coffey | S | 6-0 | 190 | 26 | 3 | SW Texas St. |
| 51 | Monte Coleman | LB | 6-2 | 230 | 29 | 8 | Central Arkansas |
| 52 | Neal Olkewicz | LB | 6-0 | 233 | 29 | 8 | Maryland |
| 53 | Jeff Bostic | C | 6-2 | 260 | 28 | 7 | Clemson |
| 54 | Joe Krakoski | LB | 6-1 | 224 | 23 | 1 | Washington |
| 56 | Calvin Daniels | LB | 6-3 | 241 | 27 | 5 | North Carolina |
| 57 | Rich Milot | LB | 6-4 | 237 | 29 | 8 | Penn State |
| 58 | Shawn Burks | LB | 6-1 | 230 | 23 | R | LSU |
| 60 | Dan McQuaid | T | 6-7 | 278 | 26 | 2 | Nev.-Las Vegas |
| 63 | Raleigh McKenzie | G | 6-2 | 262 | 23 | 2 | Tennessee |
| 64 | Steve Hamilton | DE | 6-4 | 260 | 25 | 2 | East Carolina |
| 65 | Dave Butz | DT | 6-7 | 295 | 36 | 14 | Purdue |
| 66 | Joe Jacoby | T | 6-7 | 305 | 27 | 6 | Louisville |
| 68 | Russ Grimm | G | 6-3 | 275 | 27 | 6 | Pittsburgh |
| 69 | R.C. Thielemann | G | 6-4 | 262 | 31 | 10 | Arkansas |
| 71 | Charles Mann | DE | 6-6 | 270 | 25 | 4 | Nevada-Reno |
| 72 | Dexter Manley | DE | 6-3 | 257 | 27 | 6 | Oklahoma St. |
| 73 | Mark May | T | 6-6 | 295 | 27 | 6 | Pittsburgh |
| 74 | Markus Koch | DE | 6-5 | 275 | 23 | R | Boise State |
| 76 | Ron Tilton | G | 6-4 | 250 | 23 | R | Tulane |
| 77 | Darryl Grant | DT | 6-1 | 275 | 26 | 6 | Rice |
| 78 | Dean Hamel | DT | 6-3 | 275 | 25 | 2 | Tulsa |
| 81 | Art Monk | WR | 6-3 | 209 | 28 | 7 | Syracuse |
| 82 | Anthony Jones | TE | 6-3 | 248 | 26 | 3 | Wichita State |
| 84 | Gary Clark | WR | 5-9 | 173 | 23 | 2 | James Madison |
| 85 | Don Warren | TE | 6-4 | 242 | 30 | 8 | San Diego St. |
| 86 | Clint Didier | TE | 6-5 | 240 | 27 | 5 | Portland St. |
| 87 | Terry Orr | TE | 6-3 | 227 | 25 | 1 | Texas |
| 89 | Clarence Verdin | WR/KR | 5-8 | 160 | 23 | 1 | SW Louisiana |

HEAD COACH: Joe Gibbs

ASSISTANT HEAD COACHES: Richie Petitbon and Joe Bugel

ASSISTANT COACHES: Larry Peccatiello (defensive coordinator), Don Breaux, Charley Taylor, Jerry Rhome, Warren Simmons, Emmitt Thomas, LaVern "Torgy" Torgeson, Bill Hickman, Wayne Sevier, Dan Riley, John Dunn

**RUNNING BACK ERIC DICKERSON****Los Angeles Rams Numerical Roster**

| No. | Name | Pos. | Ht. | Wt. | Age | Yr. | College |
|-----|------------------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-------------------|
| 1 | Mike Lansford | PK | 6-0 | 183 | 27 | 5 | Washington |
| 3 | Dale Hatcher | P | 6-2 | 200 | 23 | 2 | Clemson |
| 8 | Steve Dils | QB | 6-1 | 191 | 31 | 8 | Stanford |
| 10 | Steve Bartkowski | QB | 6-4 | 218 | 33 | 12 | California |
| 11 | Jim Everett | QB | 6-5 | 212 | 23 | R | Purdue |
| 20 | Johnnie Johnson | S | 6-1 | 183 | 29 | 7 | Texas |
| 21 | Nolan Cromwell | S | 6-1 | 200 | 31 | 10 | Kansas |
| 22 | Vince Newsome | S | 6-1 | 179 | 25 | 4 | Washington |
| 25 | Jerry Gray | CB | 6-1 | 183 | 23 | 2 | Texas |
| 29 | Eric Dickerson | RB | 6-3 | 220 | 25 | 4 | SMU |
| 30 | Barry Redden | RB | 5-10 | 205 | 25 | 5 | Richmond |
| 32 | Tim Tyrrell | RB | 6-1 | 201 | 25 | 3 | N. Illinois |
| 33 | Charles White | RB | 5-10 | 190 | 28 | 6 | USC |
| 45 | Darren Long | TE | 6-3 | 240 | 27 | 1 | Long Beach St. |
| 47 | LeRoy Irvin | CB | 5-11 | 184 | 28 | 7 | Kansas |
| 48 | Tim Fox | S | 5-11 | 186 | 32 | 11 | Ohio St. |
| 49 | Mickey Sutton | CB | 5-8 | 165 | 25 | 1 | Montana |
| 51 | Norwood Vann | LB | 6-1 | 234 | 24 | 3 | East Carolina |
| 52 | Cliff Thrift | LB | 6-2 | 235 | 30 | 8 | E. Central OK |
| 54 | Mike Wilcher | LB | 6-3 | 235 | 26 | 4 | North Carolina |
| 55 | Carl Ekern | LB | 6-3 | 222 | 31 | 10 | San Jose St. |
| 56 | Doug Smith | C | 6-3 | 260 | 29 | 9 | Bowling Green |
| 57 | Jim Laughlin | LB | 6-1 | 222 | 28 | 7 | Ohio St. |
| 58 | Mel Owens | LB | 6-2 | 224 | 28 | 6 | Michigan |
| 59 | Mark Jerue | G | 6-3 | 229 | 26 | 4 | Washington |
| 60 | Dennis Harrah | C | 6-3 | 265 | 32 | 12 | Miami (Fla.) |
| 61 | Tony Slaton | G | 6-2 | 279 | 23 | R | Wis.-La Crosse |
| 66 | Tom Newberry | T | 6-3 | 263 | 23 | 2 | UCLA |
| 67 | Duval Love | NT | 6-3 | 265 | 27 | 6 | Pittsburgh |
| 69 | Greg Meisner | DE | 6-4 | 263 | 29 | 9 | Hampton Institute |
| 71 | Reggie Doss | T | 6-5 | 265 | 27 | 7 | Penn St. |
| 75 | Irv Pankey | DE | 6-4 | 260 | 31 | 10 | USC |
| 77 | Gary Jeter | T | 6-4 | 275 | 31 | 11 | Jackson St. |
| 78 | Jackie Slater | WR | 5-11 | 175 | 25 | 4 | Fresno St. |
| 80 | Henry Ellard | TE | 6-2 | 235 | 32 | 11 | Texas A&I |
| 81 | David Hill | WR | 6-1 | 185 | 28 | 7 | S. Illinois |
| 83 | Chuck Scott | WR | 6-2 | 202 | 23 | 1 | Vanderbilt |
| 87 | Tony Hunter | TE | 6-4 | 237 | 25 | 4 | Notre Dame |
| 88 | Michael Young | WR | 6-1 | 185 | 24 | 2 | UCLA |
| 89 | Ron Brown | WR | 5-11 | 181 | 25 | 3 | Arizona St. |
| 90 | Mike McDonald | LB | 6-1 | 230 | 28 | 3 | USC |
| 91 | Kevin Greene | LB | 6-3 | 248 | 24 | 2 | Auburn |
| 93 | Doug Reed | DE | 6-3 | 250 | 25 | 3 | San Diego St. |
| 98 | Shawn Miller | NT | 6-4 | 255 | 24 | 3 | Utah St. |
| 99 | Alvin Wright | NT | 6-2 | 285 | 25 | 1 | Jacksonville St. |

HEAD COACH: John Robinson

ASSISTANT COACHES: Larry Brooks, Dick Coury, Lew Erber, Marv Goux, Gil Haskell, Hudson Houck, Steve Shafer, Fritz Shurmur, Bruce Snyder, Norval Turner, Fred Whittingham

the playoffs.

"We've got to be the Rams again," says Los Angeles tackle Irv Pankey. "That's total domination."

"We have to go back to the old football philosophy," adds guard Dennis Harrah.

Washington offense vs. Los Angeles defense

Through 15 games, Washington's offense ranked 4th in the NFL, averaging 356 yards per game. The unit was 4th passing (245 per game) and 14th rushing (110 per contest). For the season, the Redskins scored 368 points, an average of 23 per game.

Washington quarterback Jay Schroeder, a three-year veteran out of UCLA, was voted to the Pro Bowl this year, his first full season as an NFL starter. Through 15 games, he ranked 5th in the NFC with a 73.9 rating. While he finished the regular season with 22 touchdown passes, his biggest problem in recent weeks has been interceptions. After being picked off only 11 times in the first 13 games, he threw 11 interceptions in the final three games, including three vs. the Eagles. But he also threw two touchdown passes in the victory at Philadelphia.

Schroeder has a pair of Pro Bowl receivers to throw to. Pro Bowl starter Gary Clark, who missed the regular season finale due to a sprained ankle, finished the campaign with 74 catches for 1,265 yards and seven touchdowns. Through 15 games, Art Monk had 69 catches for 1,029

yards and four touchdowns. Tight end Clint Didier has caught 32 for 657 and three TDs. Fellow tight end Don Warren, who had 19 catches for 162 yards through 15 games, caught his only touchdown pass of the season last Sunday.

Running back George Rogers ranked 6th in the NFC through game 15 with 1,139 yards on 285 carries, while Kelvin Bryant had only 250 yards on 64 carries and reserve Keith Griffin has rushed 62 times for 197 yards. Washington's offensive line, which had allowed 25 sacks through 15 games, includes Pro Bowl guard Russ Grimm.

Through 15 games, the Rams' defense ranked 6th in the league, allowing 297 yards per contest. The unit ranked 7th vs. the rush (100 yards per game) and 11th vs. the pass (197 per game). The defense has allowed 267 points, an average of 16.7 per game.



DEFENSIVE END REGGIE DOSS



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Lineups

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Washington | Los Angeles |
| Offense | |

WR 81 Art Monk, 89 Clarence Verdin
 TE 85 Don Warren, 82 Anthony Jones
 LT 66 Joe Jacoby, 60 Dan McQuaid
 LG 68 Russ Grimm, 63 Raleigh McKenzie
 C 53 Jeff Bostic, 63 Raleigh McKenzie
 RG 69 R C Thielemann, 63 Raleigh McKenzie
 RT 73 Mark May, 60 Dan McQuaid
 TE 86 Clint Didier, 87 Terry Orr
 WR 84 Gary Clark, 46 Ricky Sanders
 QB 10 Jay Schroeder, 17 Doug Williams
 RB 38 George Rogers, 24 Kelvin Bryant

LE 71 Charles Mann, 64 Steve Hamilton
 LT 65 Dave Butz, 77 Darryl Grant
 RT 77 Darryl Grant, 78 Dean Hamel
 RE 72 Dexter Manley, 74 Markus Koch
 LLB 56 Calvin Daniels, 51 Monte Coleman
 MLB 52 Neal Olkewicz, 58 Shawn Burks
 RLB 57 Rich Milot, 51 Monte Coleman
 LCB 28 Darrell Green, 41 Tim Morrison
 RCB 45 Barry Wilburn, 32 Vernon Dean
 SS 40 Alvin Walton, 48 Ken Coffey
 FS 22 Curtis Jordan, 23 Todd Bowles

Defense

WR 89 Ron Brown, 83 Kevin House
 WR 80 Henry Ellard, 88 Michael Young
 LT 75 Irv Pankey, 67 Duval Love
 LG 66 Tom Newberry, 61 Tony Slaton
 C 56 Doug Smith, 61 Tony Slaton
 RG 60 Dennis Harrah, 61 Tony Slaton
 RT 78 Jackie Slater, 67 Duval Love
 TE 81 David Hill, 86 Damone Johnson
 QB 11 Jim Everett, 8 Steve Dils
 RB 30 Barry Redden, 32 Tim Tyrrell
 RB 29 Eric Dickerson, 33 Charles White

DE 93 Doug Reed, 98 Shawn Miller
 NT 98 Shawn Miller, 69 Greg Meisner
 DE 71 Reggie Doss, 77 Gary Jeter
 OLB 58 Mel Owens, 91 Kevin Greene
 ILB 59 Mark Jerue, 52 Cliff Thrift
 ILB 55 Carl Ekern, 57 Jim Laughlin
 OLB 54 Mike Wilcher, 51 Norwood Vann
 LC 25 Jerry Gray, 20 Johnnie Johnson
 RC 47 LeRoy Irvin, 25 Jerry Gray
 FS 22 Vince Newsome, 20 Johnnie Johnson
 SS 21 Nolan Cromwell, 48 Tim Fox

Specialists

P 12 Steve Cox, 10 Jay Schroeder
 K 14 Max Zendejas, 12 Steve Cox
 PC 53 Jeff Bostic, 77 Darryl Grant
 KC 53 Jeff Bostic, 77 Darryl Grant
 PR 31 Ken Jenkins, 89 Clarence Verdin
 KR 31 Ken Jenkins, 89 Clarence Verdin
 H 10 Jay Schroeder, 17 Doug Williams

PK 1 Mike Lansford
 P 3 Dale Hatcher
 KR 89 Ron Brown, 33 Charles White
 PR 80 Henry Ellard, 20 Johnnie Johnson
 H 8 Steve Dils, 21 Nolan Cromwell
 LS 90 Mike McDonald, 57 Jim Laughlin

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15-game totals**Bears Season Statistics**

| WON 13, LOST 2 | (*OVERTIME) |
|--|--|
| Sept 7 | W 41-31 Cleveland |
| Sept 14 | AW 13-10 Philadelphia |
| Sept 22 | W 25-12 at Green Bay |
| Sept 28 | W 44-7 at Cincinnati |
| Oct 5 | W 23-0 Minnesota |
| Oct 12 | W 20-7 at Houston |
| Oct 19 | L 7-23 at Minnesota |
| Oct 26 | W 13-7 Detroit |
| Nov 3 | L 17-20 Rams |
| Nov 10 | W 23-3 at Tampa Bay |
| Nov 16 | W 13-10 at Atlanta |
| Nov 23 | W 12-10 Green Bay |
| Nov 30 | AW 13-10 Pittsburgh |
| Dec 7 | W 48-14 Tampa Bay |
| Dec 15 | W 16-13 at Detroit |
| Dec 21 | at Dallas |
| | Bears Opponents |
| TOTAL FIRST DOWNS | 288 225 |
| Rushing | 156 64 |
| Passing | 112 140 |
| Penalty | 20 21 |
| 3rd Down: Made/Att | 71/195 72/214 |
| 4th Down: Made/Att | 5/12 10/19 |
| TOTAL NET YARDS | 5144 3870 |
| Avg. Per Game | 342.9 258.0 |
| Total Plays | 982 933 |
| Avg. Per Play | 5.2 4.1 |
| NET YARDS RUSHING | 2539 1353 |
| Avg. Per Game | 169.3 90.2 |
| Total Rushes | 569 402 |
| NET YARDS PASSING | 2605 2517 |
| Avg. Per Game | 173.7 167.8 |
| Tackled/Yards Lost | 20/134 55/436 |
| Gross Yards | 2739 2953 |
| Att./Completions | 393/199 476/225 |
| Completion Pct. | 50.6 47.3 |
| Had Intercepted | 22 28 |
| PUNTS/AVERAGE | 64/ 40.5 92/ 40.8 |
| NET PUNTING AVG. | 36.7 33.4 |
| PENALTIES/YARDS | 94/ 747 101/ 786 |
| FUMBLES/BALL LOST | 33/19 25/14 |
| TOUCHDOWNS | 35 19 |
| Rushing | 20 4 |
| Passing | 10 11 |
| Returns | 5 4 |
| SCORE BY PERIODS | 1 2 3 4 OT Total |
| BEARS | 81 70 79 92 6 328 |
| OPPONENTS | 35 36 65 41 0 177 |
| SCORING | TD-Ru-Pa-Rt PAT F TIP |
| Butler | 0 0 0 33/34 27/40 0 114 |
| Payton | 7 3 0 0/ 0 0/ 0 0 60 |
| Sanders | 5 0 0 0/ 0 0/ 0 0 30 |
| Gault | 0 4 0 0/ 0 0/ 0 0 24 |
| Gentry | 1 0 2 0/ 0 0/ 0 0 18 |
| Tomczak | 3 0 0 0/ 0 0/ 0 0 18 |
| Marshall | 0 0 2 0/ 0 0/ 0 0 12 |
| Ortego | 0 2 0 0/ 0 0/ 0 0 12 |
| Suhey | 2 0 0 0/ 0 0/ 0 0 12 |
| Barnes | 0 0 1 0/ 0 0/ 0 0 6 |
| Flutie | 1 0 0 0/ 0 0/ 0 0 6 |
| McMahon | 1 0 0 0/ 0 0/ 0 0 6 |
| Moorehead | 0 1 0 0/ 0 0/ 0 0 6 |
| Hampton | 0 0 0 0/ 0 0/ 0 1 2 |
| McMichael | 0 0 0 0/ 0 0/ 0 1 2 |
| BEARS | 20 10 5 33/35 27/40 2 328 |
| OPPONENTS | 4 11 4 18/19 15/21 0 177 |
| SACKS: Hampton 9.5, Dent 9.5, McMichael 8.5, Duerson 7.0, Wilson 6.0, Perry 4.0, Marshall 4.5, Harris 2.0, Singletary 1.0, Fencik 1.0, Hartenstein 1.0, Rivera 1.0, BEARS 55.0, OPPONENTS 20.0 | |
| PASSING | Att Cmp Yds Cmp% Yds/Att TD% Int% Int% Long Sack/Lost Rating |
| McMahon | 150 77 995 51.3 6.63 5 3.3 8 5.3 t58 6/ 40 61.4 |
| Tomczak | 145 73 1084 50.3 7.48 2 1.4 9 6.2 85 4/ 30 53.0 |
| Fuller | 62 34 451 54.8 7.27 2 3.2 3 4.8 t50 8/ 53 68.7 |
| Flutie | 32 15 209 46.9 6.53 1 3.1 1 3.1 53 2/ 11 65.8 |
| Payton | 4 0 0 0.0 0.00 0 0.0 1 25.0 0 0/ 0 0.0 |
| BEARS | 393 199 2739 50.6 6.97 10 2.5 22 5.6 85 20/ 134 58.5 |
| OPPONENTS | 476 225 2953 47.3 6.20 11 2.3 28 5.9 t65 55/ 436 50.5 |

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Wild-Card

Continued From Page 8

Through 15 games, Ekern had 87 tackles. Gary had eight interceptions while Irvin had six. The team's tackle leader is safety Vince Newsome with 107. Gary Jeter leads the team in sacks with eight while Kevin Greene has seven.

Los Angeles offense vs. Washington defense

Through 15 games, the Rams' offense ranked 21st in the NFL, averaging 295 yards per game. The unit was 3rd rushing (157 per contest) and 28th passing (138 per game). The Rams have scored points, an average of 19.3 per game.

Under the direction of rookie quarterback Jim Everett during the past six weeks, the Rams defeated the Saints, Jets and Cowboys, but lost to the Patriots, Dolphins and 49ers. He had a 81.3 rating prior to the regular season finale. The 49ers intercepted him three times.

Even though he missed half the season due to a contract dispute, wide receiver Henry Ellard led the Rams in receiving this year. Through 15 games, he had caught 31 for 406 yards and four touchdowns. Speedster Ron Brown had caught only 25 for 396.

Eric Dickerson led the NFL in rushing with 1,821 yards. Leading the way for him are Pro Bowl starters Jackie Slater and Harrah, and Pro Bowl reserve center Doug Smith.

Washington's defense ranks 20th in the NFL, allowing 336 yards per game. The unit ranks 12th vs. the rush (110 per game) and 23rd vs. the pass (225 per game). On the season, the unit allowed 296 points, an average of 18.5 per game.

The Redskin defense has two Pro Bowl starters, defensive Dexter Manley (17.5 sacks) and cornerback Darrell Green (five interceptions). Washington's tackle leaders include Neal Olkewicz (164), Curtis Jordan (158) and Rick Milot (124).

The special teams

The Redskins have used four placekickers this year. They started the season with Mark Moseley, but he was cut and replaced by Zendejas. When Zendejas was placed on injured-reserve last week, the Skins signed free agent Jess Atkinson. Punter Steve Cox has also attempted six field goals this year, connecting on three of them.

As a punter, Cox ranks 2nd in the league with a 44.1 average. Return specialist Ken Jenkins is 4th in the league with a 9.6 average on punt returns, and ranks 7th as a kick returner with a 20.5 average.

Los Angeles placekicker Mike Lansford connected on 17 of 24 field goal attempts during the regular season. Ram punter Dale Hatcher ranks 13th in the NFC with a 38.4 average. Brown ranks 5th in the NFC as a kick returner with a 22.1 average. Ellard is averaging 8.9 on punt returns.

1987 Schedule

The Bears' 1987 schedule will be tougher than this year's as Chicago faces four 1986 playoff teams next year.

Chicago's schedule includes four games at home and four on the road against each of its NFC Central Division rivals, Minnesota, Green Bay, Detroit and Tampa Bay.

Chicago's other home games will be against the Giants, Kansas City Chiefs, New Orleans Saints and Los Angeles Raiders.

The other four road games are against the Philadelphia Eagles, Denver Broncos, San Francisco 49ers and Seattle Seahawks.

The dates and times for the games will be released later by the NFL.

Bears' Schedule

REGULAR SEASON

| |
|-------------------------------|
| BEARS 41, Cleveland 31 |
| BEARS 13, Philadelphia 10 OT |
| BEARS 25, Green Bay 12 |
| BEARS 44, Cincinnati 7 |
| BEARS 23, Minnesota 0 |
| BEARS 20, Houston 7 |
| Minnesota 23, BEARS 7 |
| BEARS 13, Detroit 7 |
| Los Angeles Rams 20, BEARS 17 |
| BEARS 23, Tampa Bay 3 |
| BEARS 13, Atlanta 10 |
| BEARS 12, Green Bay 10 |
| BEARS 13, Pittsburgh 10 (ot) |
| BEARS 48, Tampa Bay 14 |
| BEARS 16, Detroit 13 |
| BEARS 24, Dallas 10 |

Experience important for QB's in playoffs

The Bears always have found beating opponents more interesting when they can topple history in the bargain. So maybe it's not so bad that no team has won a Super Bowl starting a young, back-up quarterback. The Bears can. Mike Tomczak is in his second year, Doug Flutie in his first.

Even if they try to do it with Steve Fuller, in his eighth season, the 1980 Raiders are the only precedent to have won a Super Bowl with any back-up starting at quarterback.

By
Kevin
Lamb



"Everybody thinks we definitely can't win without him," linebacker Otis Wilson said after Jim McMahon was declared out for the season. "So I guess we've got to prove everybody wrong."

Even Fuller lacks the experience Jim Plunkett had with the 1980 Oakland Raiders. Plunkett was firmly established in his job after leading the Raiders to 12 victories in his 14 starts. Fuller led the Bears within one game of the Super Bowl two years ago, but he went into the finale at Dallas firmly established in coach Mike Ditka's doghouse after starting the team's only 1986 defeats. As a confidence builder, this season has been a ball and chain.

Flutie would be the first rookie quarterback to start for

any Super Bowl team. The only second-year starter was Dan Marino for Miami two years ago, when the Dolphins lost and Marino had probably the worst game of his career.

The 1971 Cowboys' Roger Staubach, the 1981 49ers' Joe Montana, the 1982 Dolphins' David Woodley and the 1979 Rams' Vince Ferragamo started Super Bowls in their third seasons. But Staubach and Montana were the only winners, and they, like Marino, had led the conference in passing. You'd have to combine the stats of Tomczak, Fuller and Flutie to qualify for the NFC passing lead this year, and Tomczak would have ranked last going into the Dallas game.

Super Bowl quarterbacks need experience

The main point all this history makes is that inexperienced quarterbacks haven't won Super Bowls. Even Tomczak acknowledges the value of experience, which he was trying to devour by the shovelful before his leg bruise at Detroit moved him to the back of the line.

"It builds your confidence," he said. "It's great to practice, but there's nothing like game-time experience. As you continue to mature, you're faced with certain important situations and you're going to make mistakes. The next time you face them, hopefully you'll respond better."

There's no substitute for experience. Football boils down to reacting to situations. The more often you've seen one, the better you react to it.

"You don't have to think as much. You just do things automatically," guard Mark Bortz says. And for a quarterback facing a pass rush, there is no time to think.

"There are so many things a defensive team can do," Bear coordinator Vince Tobin says. "You've got to be able to recognize immediately which one they're doing now. Every defense has its strengths and weaknesses, and you've got to know where to go against it. That only comes with experience, seeing things over and over."

David Woodley knows that as well as anyone. Unlike Ferragamo, who had begun his Super Bowl season as a back-up, Woodley was a 2½ year starter essentially filling in until the Dolphins found someone better. They did. They drafted Marino three months after the Super Bowl. Four years later, Woodley runs a racketball club near Miami.

"I was virtually unknown outside Miami," Woodley says now. "When I went to the Super Bowl, I was the center of attention. Everybody wants to know where you're from, what you eat, what you do, everything."

"You have a tendency to get caught up in all that. The game becomes almost secondary. I think that's why most Super Bowls are such poorly played games. It's difficult to focus on the real issue, which is the football game. Especially if you're young."

"If I had to do over, I would probably be a lot less available. Because once the game's over, if you lose, nobody wants to know who you are. If you win, then you've got the world."

Lorres can prove valuable

Through the playoffs, Woodley says, it was valuable that he had played for the Dolphin team that had lost in the previous playoffs. Tomczak and Flutie have never lost an NFL playoff game, although most of their teammates have.

"You lose and you're out," Woodley says. "It's something you know. Coaches can tell you. But it's something you actually have to go through yourself, to feel the shock of having your season end like that."

Besides, the playoff teams have the best defenses. This year especially, defense is carrying the top NFC teams. And the best defenses can make things toughest for young quarterbacks.

They can do more things, and do them better. They don't do what's expected. The Bears have seen that all season.

"The biggest thing they do is disguise their intentions," Woodley says. "They'll show you things you've never seen before. They'll give you a different look early in the game, like a safety blitz, and then they'll use that same look later to disguise what they really want to do."

"I'd see it and I'd be thinking, here it comes again. But they'd come with something else."

"Even from my second to my third year, it was a big difference. You'd see that and you'd know exactly what they were doing and it wouldn't bother you anymore. But in the second year, you'd guess: What are they going to do now?"

Continued Page 14



Doug Flutie got a little more experience in preparation for the playoffs during Sunday's game against the Cowboys. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

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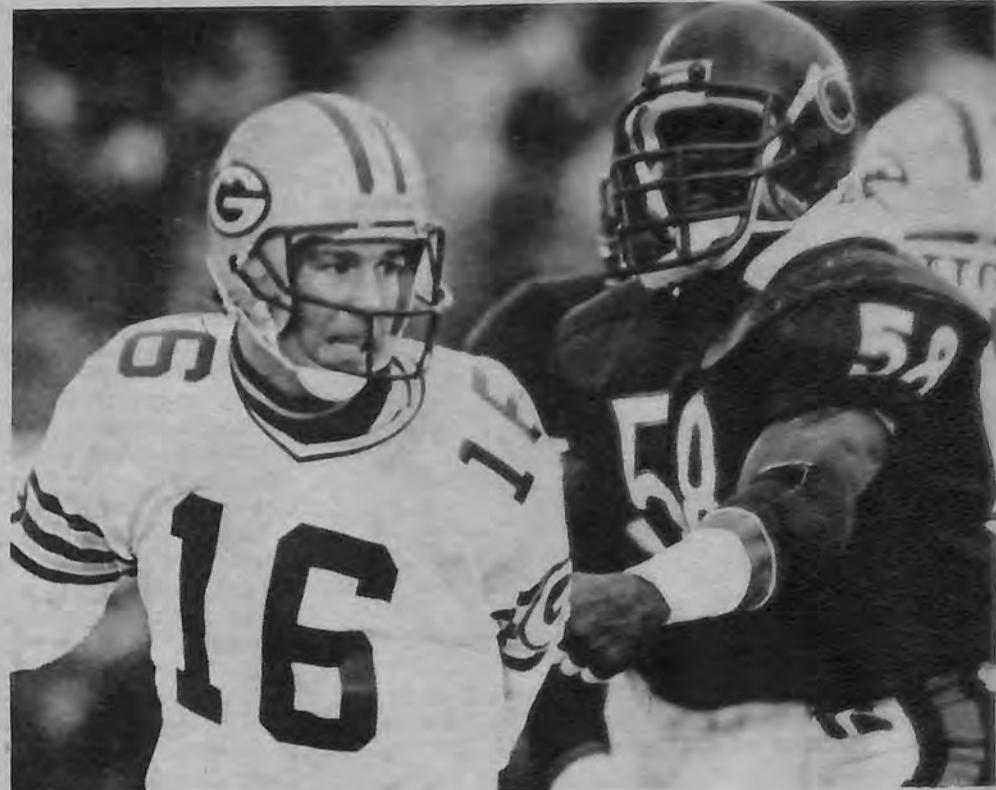
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Seven Bears make Pro-Bowl team



DAVE DUERSON



WILBER MARSHALL

Though seven Bears were named to the NFC Pro Bowl team last week most players on the team were upset about those Bears left off the team.

Chosen for the first time from the Bears were defensive tackle Steve McMichael and linebacker Wilber Marshall. Other Bears named to the team were running back Walter Payton, middle linebacker Mike Singletary, strong safety Dave Duerson, tackle Jim Covert and center Jay Hilgenberg. All of them have previously played in the Pro Bowl.

The game will be played Feb. 1 in Honolulu.

Three Bears who made the team last year were not included on this year's squad. They are defensive ends Dan Hampton and Richard Dent and linebacker Otis Wilson.

The Bears had two fewer players selected this year than last year, when nine players were selected. Chicago lost one player each from the offense and the defense. Voting is done by the NFC players.

Among the most irate Bears about the snubs was McMichael. "We've been the number one defense the last three years. There should be at least eight of us going," he said. "I don't know what the players are doing who are voting, but they darn sure aren't playing against Dan and Richard. It's a travesty."

The Giants led the conference with eight players going. The Rams had seven players selected and the Redskins

six. All seven Bears were selected as starters, while the Giants have only four players starting.

Dent blamed weak blocking in the NFC East for his being left out. Four of the top five sack leaders made the team. And all of them — Lawrence Taylor and Leonard Marshall of the Giants, Dexter Manley of the Redskins and Reggie White of the Eagles — play in the East division.

"The only way you do it is by getting stats. And there's nobody over there blocking," Dent said.

"It's a shame," Marshall said about some of his teammates being left out. "When you got other players voting they don't want to have too many of the same guys. Mike Richardson had a great year. I just don't understand why he didn't make it. Teams are not scoring deep on us and it's because of those guys back there."

Added Singletary, "I'm really surprised that only four guys are representing the defense. I don't know why it happens. I think we've gained a reputation around the league as being one of those dirty ballclubs. And I don't think that's true. It's a very unfortunate rap we've taken."

Also left off the team from the Bears were two special teams stars, Dennis Gentry and Neal Anderson. Two Cardinals beat them out, kick returner Vai Sikahema and special teams player Ron Wolfley.

"I've never seen Wolfley play so I'm not sure how good he is," Anderson said. But he wasn't upset at not making the team. "Anytime you do well and even talk about the chance of going to the Pro Bowl, that's good in itself," he said.

Both Duerson and Hilgenberg credited the people they play with for their selection. "The reason I'm able to play the way I do is because of the guys that play around me," Duerson said.

Added Hilgenberg, "I'm just one person that's representing the whole offensive line."

Bears coach Mike Ditka was happy for his players that made the team, but he wasn't overly concerned with it. "It's a great honor for those guys," he said. "But the bowl we're looking for is not the Pro Bowl. I'm glad to see Steve McMichael get the recognition he deserves."

Marshall, left off the team last year, also was glad he got some recognition. "I worked all year for it for two years," he said. "It's just the start of a beginning for me."

Wilson, on the other hand, was philosophical about his snub. "What the hell, I get the rest when this is all over with," he said. "I'm still going to Hawaii, I just have to pay for it."

Continued Page 15



WALTER PAYTON



STEVE MCMICHAEL

Practice getting hard in cold weather

At least one Bear was dissatisfied with the team's ballyhooed attempts to keep the practice field warm with heat blowers recently.

"I think they wasted \$50,000," said wide receiver Willie Gault. Gault said practice was a joke the Thursday before the Lion Monday night game when temperatures plunged and snowy winds whipped across a field that was supposed to have been kept warm by the new equipment.

"The field froze less than an hour after they took the covering off," he said. "And we could only practice on half the field. The other half was covered by the tarp and they couldn't get it off because it was weighted down by snow."

Gault said the frozen field greatly increased the chance of player injury.

The Bears are the only cold weather team in the NFC Central without easy access to an indoor practice facility.

By
Brian
Hewitt

NFL Notebook

HONOR ROLE:

It's that time of the season so Philadelphia head coach Buddy Ryan is passing out end-of-year report cards. The grade he gives himself: "A+." The Eagles were 5-9-1 after 15 weeks.

"I know that sounds arrogant," Ryan said. "But I believe it. I can't see any mistakes. I should have claimed (tight end) Jimmie Giles off the waiver wire. But there's nobody I let go that I wish I could pull back."

"We're 10 times better now than when I got here. We're young and getting better. It's going to be beautiful."

Ryan went on to predict the Eagles will make the playoffs

next year and the Super Bowl the year after that.

Other Ryan grades:

An "A" to the Philadelphia fans; a "B" to the coaching staff; a "B" to the players and, of course, a "C" to the local news media.

MEYER WEEENER:

Newly-appointed Colt head coach Ron Meyer will fit nicely into owner Bob Irsay's menagerie if the statements Meyer made recently about Heisman Trophy winning quarterback Vinny Testaverde are any indication.

"I like our quarterback," Meyer said referring to Gary Hogeboom. "I'm not even sure that (the quarterback position) is a priority."

The Colts had an inside track at earning the first pick in the first round of next spring's college draft until two late wins brought Tampa Bay into the picture.

TESTA-MONY:

If the Colts do somehow end up with Testaverde, Irsay says he isn't interested in trading him.

"I would say it's 99.9 percent we're going to keep him," Irsay said. "I personally think he's in the same class as (Dolphin Dan) Marino and (Ram Jim) Everett. I guess if the Giants offered Lawrence Taylor, Joe Morris and four or five other players, I might consider a trade. I'd be nuts not to take it. But nobody's going to give me what I want."

LET'S MAKE A DEAL:

Meanwhile the rumor mill is rife with offers other teams are considering making in the quest for Testaverde.

RAMS — Quarterback Jim Everett, running back Barry Redden and wide receiver Henry Ellard for Testaverde.

SEATTLE — Safety Kenny Easley, defensive end Jeff Bryant and a first rounder for Testaverde.

RAIDERS — Running back Marcus Allen, wide receiver Jessie Hester and defensive lineman Greg Townsend for Testaverde.

ATLANTA — Running back Gerald Riggs, nose tackle Tony Casillas and two first rounders for Testaverde.

HONEST JOHN:

The last time the Colts had a shot at a quarterback of Testaverde's caliber it was John Elway. Elway smartly used the threat of a pro baseball career to force a trade

that sent him to Denver. He has never looked back.

"We've got a stat board in our room," Elway said after Week 14. "And when I see the Colts at 1-13, it makes my decision even that much more right."

ZIPPED LIPS:

And finally, the fallout from the recent 27-23 Falcon loss to the Colts is still scattering throughout Georgia, where head coach Dan Henning instructed players not to talk to the press.

Atlanta is struggling and Henning's job is reportedly on the line again. Atlanta executive vice-president Taylor Smith labeled the Colt loss, "sickening."

BENSON'S HEDGE:

New York Giant tackle Brad Benson became the first linemen ever to win the NFC Offensive Player of the Week award for holding Washington's Dexter Manley sackless in the Dec. 7 24-14 Giant win. "That means I'm hellacious," said Manley.

Benson was so intense in his preparations for Manley that his wife temporarily moved out of their house the Thursday before the game. "The problem was I didn't even know she was gone," Benson said.

DEXTER-ITY:

After 14 weeks Manley was the NFL's leading sacker since 1982 with 63½. Jet Mark Gastineau was No. 2 with 62½. The next 10, in order were: Giant Lawrence Taylor 60½, Seahawk Jacob Green 57½, Patriot Andre Tippett 53, Eagle Greg Brown 49½, Raider Howie Long 47½, Bear Richard Dent 46, Cardinal Curtis Greer 44½, Dolphin Doug Betters 43½, Saint Rickey Jackson 43½ and Cowboy Randy White 43½.

NOTES AND QUOTES: Philadelphia coach Buddy Ryan, a former Jet assistant, on the death threats leveled at Dallas coach Tom Landry recently: "We were playing in Dallas 100 years ago when they had a threat on Joe Namath. The only thing you do is, you just don't stand by Joe Namath. You just don't stand by Landry. I think across the field will be far enough." . . . Several weeks ago Cleveland punter Jeff Gossett shanked five punts against Houston. The next week he kicked five out inside the 11 yard line of Buffalo. Gossett on the post-Houston media reaction: "They hop all over you like vultures, as if you're dead." . . . Tampa Bay guard Sean Farrell after being heckled by a spectator: "Look, why don't we talk about this Monday when you pick up my trash." . . . Patriot coach Raymond Berry after New England's 31-7 loss to Cincinnati: "I'm sure something good came out of this for us. I'm just not smart enough to know what it is."



The Bears held Dallas' backfield duo of Herschel Walker (34) and Tony Dorsett to a total of 68 yards on the ground in Sunday's game. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

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Flutie

Continued From Page 3

goal that just made it over the crossbar to cut Chicago's lead to 24-3.

Dallas scored a touchdown with just 15 seconds left in the game on an 11-yard pass from Steve Pelluer to Mike Renfro to make the final 24-10. The touchdown pass came against Mike Richardson, stopping his bid to go the entire season without giving up a touchdown pass.

But the Bears did manage to keep other records going. They finished the season with a streak of 33 quarters in which they haven't given up a rushing touchdown. And the defense set a new record for least points allowed in a 16-game season.

The Bears allowed just 187 points this year, breaking the record of 195 set by the 1978 Steelers. Last year the Bears gave up 198 points.

"A lot of things have been put to rest, period," Ditka said. "Take that any way you want."

"The way the defense played under Vince Tobin and the records they set is just great. I'm just so proud of what the players and the coaching staff have accomplished this year."

"I can't say enough about the effort they put into this season. The way we prepare, our assistant coaches are just excellent. They do such a great job for us."

Anderson still impressing Ditka

Ditka also had praise for Anderson, who had another great day on special teams and ran the ball well for 30 yards on 9 carries.

"I liked the effectiveness of Neal," Ditka said. "I think he can do a lot of things besides running the ball. He's got great speed and made a great catch. The more he plays the more I know he's something special. He makes things happen and has great leadership qualities."

Now all that's left to see is if the players and staff can continue doing the job it takes to win another Super Bowl.

As Willie Gault said, "If we play error-free football we can control our own destiny."

GAME NOTES: Despite Sunday's win by the Bears, Dallas still leads the series 9-5. The Cowboys had won six straight games before the Bears' 44-0 win last year at Texas Stadium. Before that game the Bears' last win against Dallas was in 1971, when Mike Ditka was a Cowboys' tight end. Chicago is now 2-4 at Texas Stadium... Since 1984 Ditka is 39-9 in regular season games. He is 2-1 against the Cowboys. Sunday's win was Ditka's 50th regular season win... The Bears are the first NFL team to have back-to-back 13-win regular seasons since the Frankfort Yellowjackets in 1925-26. The Bears and Giants are the only two pro franchises with three 13-win regular seasons in their history. The Bears have done it in 1934, 1985 and 1986... The Bears have won 10 of their last 12 sea-

son finales... Mike Richardson became only the fourth Bear since 1963 to have seven interceptions in one season when he picked off his seventh pass against Detroit... Chicago's win over Detroit was its seventh come-from-behind win this season and the fifth game it has won by a field goal or less this year... Going into the Dallas game the Bears hadn't allowed a rushing touchdown in their last seven games. Chicago had allowed just four rushing touchdowns all season and five touchdowns in the last 33 quarters. In 13 of its first 15 games this season Chicago has allowed one touchdown or less... Entering Sunday's game Walter Payton had rushed for 100 yards or more in four of his six games against Dallas. In 1981 he gained 179 yards against the Cowboys.

Lamb

Continued From Page 11

Confidence another big factor

It's hard not for a young quarterback to be tentative. Even Fuller, perhaps gun-shy over being yanked for interceptions, developed a hesitant shuffle at the end of his drop that disrupted pass-route timing and left him more vulnerable to sacks. Flutie, with less than a month of offensive practice, has been tentative just calling plays, let alone executing them. Tomczak hasn't always planted his back foot, Ditka says, and has gotten into trouble guiding the ball instead of letting it rip. That happens when a quarterback has to follow thought processes instead of second nature.

"There's times he makes mistakes or gets nervous," Thayer says. "But there's also times he makes big plays by himself."

That is the kind of experience the Bears' fill-in quarterbacks need most. It's too late now. The playoffs are starting. The Bears held out hope for too long that McMahon would return, ignoring his painful symptoms instead of investigating them, and were left with only three weeks to develop both Tomczak and Flutie into playoff quarterbacks. When Tomczak was hurt, they were left with one game and virtually no recent experience at quarterback.

They can overcome that problem. They, more than any other NFL team, have the defense to do it. But it would be nice if the Bears went into the playoffs with a quarterback remembering recent touchdown passes. Confident he could make first-down scrambles. Knowing he had made big third-down plays. Absolutely certain he would make the plays that overcome the inevitable mistakes.

"He's got to know he can do it when he has to do it," tight end Emery Moorehead says. "It's going to intensify in the playoffs. Every play is so intense. It's important that he has confidence in what he's doing, and for us to have confidence in him."



Jim McMahon was in Dallas Sunday watching the game after leaving Los Angeles where he underwent shoulder surgery Dec. 12. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

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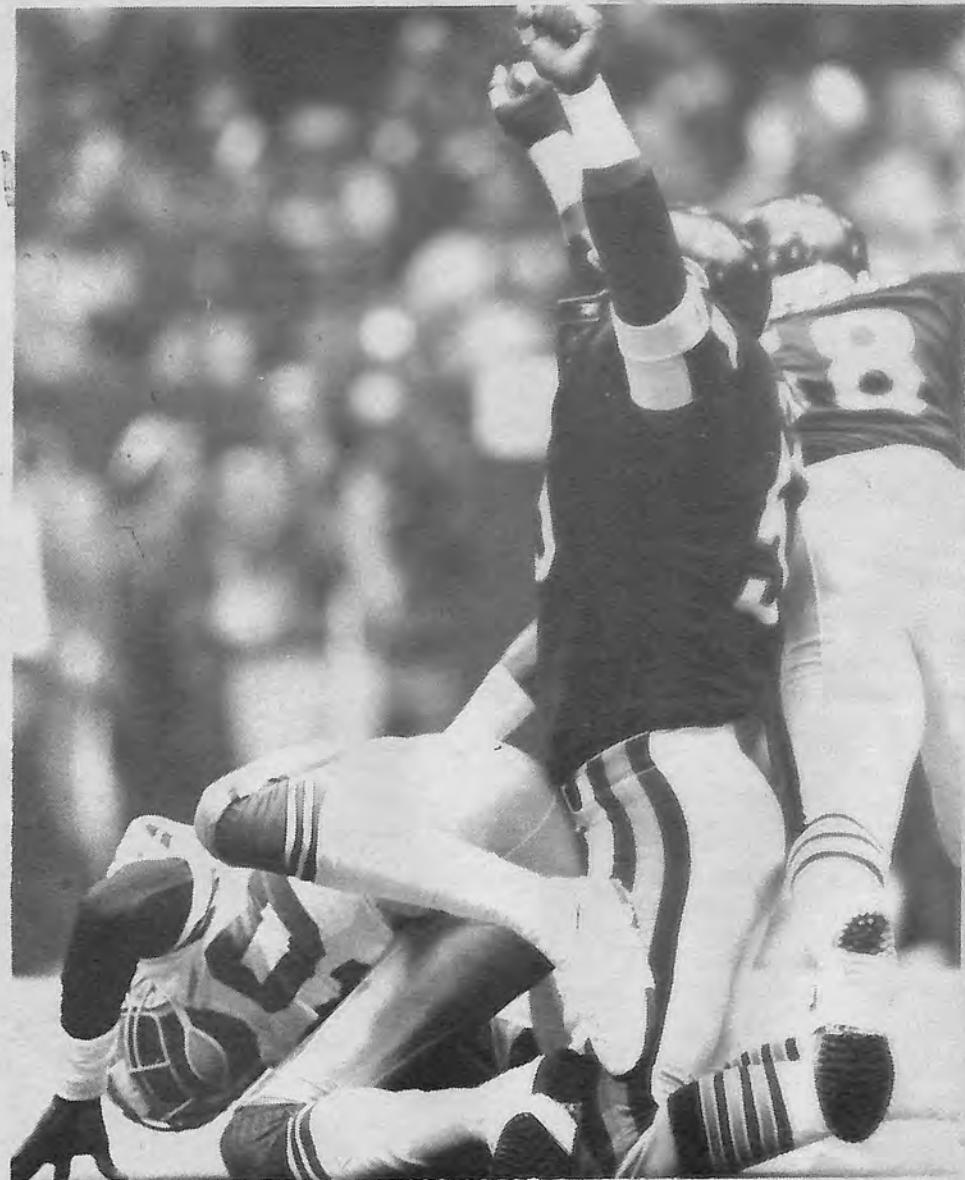
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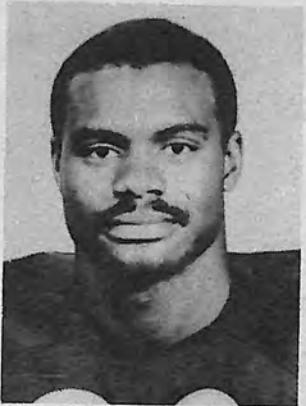
Wilber Marshall looks for some running room after intercepting a pass during Chicago's final regular season game Sunday against the Cowboys. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)



Otis Wilson and Wilber Marshall combine for this sack against Dallas in the fourth quarter of Sunday's game...

and Wilson shows his feelings about the big play. A few days earlier he was snubbed from the NFC Pro Bowl team. (Bear Report photo by Steve Wolmann)

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